

## Testimony On SB616

### Senate Finance Committee

March 15, 2022

#### **Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS**

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am a resident of District 42/42A and a Maryland ratepayer who is sick of paying for dirty energy. I write to express my support for SB616 with amendments to also remove other dirty energy sources from the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS). I strongly support removing trash incineration from the RPS. It is not sustainable or renewable. It harms the health of nearby communities through its emissions of carcinogens and neurotoxins, and emits more greenhouse gasses per unit of energy than coal, the dirtiest of fossil fuels. We encourage you to amend SB616 to also remove other sources of energy that emit greenhouse gasses from the RPS.

Trash incineration should never have been included in Tier 1 of the RPS. Maryland's trash incinerators pollute more than Maryland's coal plants per unit of energy each produces, and emit significant quantities of greenhouse gasses and local harmful air pollution. Much of their energy comes from burning plastic, a fossil fuel. In the original design of the RPS program, incinerators were included in the Tier 2 category that was to phase out in 2019. But in 2011 community pressure mounted against two new proposed incinerators in Baltimore and Frederick and the incinerator industry got itself added to Tier 1. Ultimately, the community opposition won and neither facility was built. But \$36 million in RPS subsidies still goes to incineration each year.

The inclusion of polluters in the RPS means that in 2020 Maryland ratepayers paid over \$30 million to buy RECs from facilities that emit greenhouse gasses and over \$246 million since 2008. The Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility estimates that if nothing changes, those costs will mount to half a billion dollars subsidizing polluters by 2030.

There is no way that subsidizing dirty energy makes sense for Maryland residents.

- Maryland's RPS program spends millions of dollars on a Virginia biomass facility that is too dirty to qualify for Virginia's own recently-enacted RPS.
- Maryland allows credits for burning "biomass gas" from DC's Blue Plains wastewater treatment plant, which makes fertilizer from sewage sludge with extremely high levels of toxic per- and polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) that is sold to the public for a profit.
- Most RPS facilities are located outside of Maryland and provide no energy to Maryland energy suppliers.

Dirty energy subsidies burdens ratepayer with higher bills and contribute to multiple adverse health impacts.

Please support SB616 with amendments to cover all polluters in the RPS. Tier 1 dollars should go toward supporting wind, solar, hydro, and geothermal power – not greenhouse gas emissions.

Sincerely,

Sharon Davlin  
District 42/42A

